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ABSTRACT

More than 50 percent of the world's adult population is unable to read or write at all. Since many of the tutors of adult illiterates have not had training in the teaching of reading, this booklet was written to introduce these tutors to the practical aspects of an area which has a vast literature of its own. The eleven sections in the booklet focus on various aspects of reading and writing: introducing reading without books--method 1; summary of lesson model; introducing reading without books--method 2; making your own materials with your pupil; writing (with examples of writing patterns and the printed alphabet); word attack skills; using cassette or tape recorder; phonics; spelling; social sight vocabulary; diagnosis; and conclusions. (JM)

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A Booklet for Volunteer Tutors

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To Donald Moyle I owe thanks for the considerable practical help and advice given to me regarding the content and format of this booklet, and the enthusiasm he has shown in getting it published.

My thanks also to Bob Kedney of Newton-le-Willows College of Further Education for the continued interest, help and advice he has given.

Tom MacFarlane

Preface

Writing a handbook such as this is obviously a task for experts, but too often they fail to communicate their intentions to lesser mortals, leaving us unable to read with comprehension.

My role has been that of the 'non-expert' among experts: to comment on jargon, to watch flights of fancy, and to attempt to help in presenting valuable ideas to potential tutors with a wide range of background and experience. Tom MacFarlane, as a practising teacher in the field, has made this task easy.

Any handbook must be recognized for what it is: merely an introduction and a brief guide to action in a field where the complexity of the issues are only just being recognized. It therefore needs to be used alongside participation in training courses, meetings with fellow-tutors, and one's own organizing tutor, before applying the ideas that are presented here in any particular situation. Working with non-literate adults raises specific problems peculiar to each individual teaching situation, and the finest of handbooks could not begin to do other than warn you of this difficulty. Feedback needs to be constant, and in preparing a tutor's handbook the onus for giving this shifts to the reader. Do please help us by sending your comments.

R. J. Kedney,
Head of Adult Studies,
Newton-le-Willows College of F.E.

Foreword

More than fifty per cent of the world's adult population cannot read or write at all. It is in the context of this world situation that we must view the problem in Britain. There is a need for more action but certainly no excuse for panic. There are not any really acceptable statistics that determine what the illiteracy figures are in Britain, but there is little doubt that there are many thousands. Further there are many others whose reading attainment is so low it is painful for them to read and they cannot really employ the skill at any useful level in their daily lives.

I suppose there are three basic reasons for trying to make all adults literate.

(a) so that they feel socially accepted.
(b) so that they may read for pleasure.
(c) so that they may use reading in their work or to further their understanding.

Certainly there is no merit in teaching adults to read simply to produce improved national statistics or to impart a skill which an individual might never find enjoyable or useful. The above comment must be held firmly before our minds or we may produce people whom Keith Gardner once referred to as 'more statistically respectable non-readers' – people with a skill which they do not use or may not know how to use.

It is becoming increasingly evident from work among our children that skills taught in isolation, are mastered more slowly, often develop poor attitudes and their usefulness is frequently unappreciated. A skill needs to be placed in its real life setting. Though in the early stages of reading there will no doubt be periods of mechanical work aimed at increasing the ability to recognise words, there must also be times when the pupil discovers the joy and usefulness of reading via the content of the tasks he undertakes. This is not easy but if success is to be real then the inclusion of these elements is essential.

For many reasons, some a sad reflection on educational resources, others quite valid, it would seem that many tutors of adult illiterates will continue to be people who have not had training in the teaching of reading. It is to these tutors that this handbook is addressed. It forms an introduction to practical aspects of an area with an immense literature of its own. It is based upon a good deal of experience with children and adults and forms an excellent and clear exposition of the major lines of attack which can be employed among adults. It is hoped that tutors will read more widely and also develop the ideas presented, but a thoughtful consideration of this little booklet will do much on its own to stimulate good teaching of the adult illiterate among tutors who are no doubt busy people already.

Donald Moyle

A. Introducing Reading Without Books — Method 1

1. Discuss a reason for writing something: a letter, message, or some interest that your pupil has.

2. Discuss what your pupil is going to say. Try not to alter what he says too much: if he does not speak the way you do, lean towards accepting his speech.

3. Write down what he says in good clear print, using capitals only where we normally do so, and accentuate the space between the words. This helps to get over the idea of words as separate entities.

4. Read the sentence back to him, pointing to the words. Try and keep your finger moving slowly with each syllable if you can. This is helping to get over to your pupil the idea of left-right directionality.

5. Get him to read it back to you, several times if need be, and try and build your pupil up to reading the sentence in a natural way. One of the dangers at this stage is a word-by-word parrot approach which becomes unhelpful from the point of view of getting any meaning out of reading.

6. Now write your pupil's sentences out again in such a way that you can cut them into sentence strips for him to match with the first set you wrote.

7. Make him match up the sentences by putting the same sentences on top of each other. Check his reading.

8. You could stop the lesson here if you felt it necessary and get your pupil to practise sentence matching as "home-work".

9. The next step is to cut the sentences into words. Get two envelopes — one with your name on and one with your pupil's name on.
Get him to put each word on top of the original word in the original sentence. Check his reading.
Take the words off the sentences and, using one sentence at a time, give him a word at random and ask him to find out what it says. Encourage him to read the sentence either aloud or to himself to find out what the word says.

10. Step nine could usefully be practised as "home-work."

Now remove the sentence sheet and get the two envelopes with the names on. Tell your pupils you are going to see how many words he can win from you. Test him on the words in isolation and at random, putting all the words he can read into his envelope, and all those he cannot into yours. You may have to go back and re-work step 9 to help over words he cannot master.

If a sympathetic relative can play this game with him for home-work so much the better, if not, your pupil will have to do his best to practise on his own.

11. Repeat steps 1 - 10 with a new set of sentences.
Two or three sentences should be more than enough at any one go.

12. You can begin phonic work using the words he has already given you — but stick to initial letter sounds at this stage. This is more fully explained in section G.7.

Choose a word from his sentences and try this:

"Can you think of some words that begin with (letter sound) like (actual word) in your sentence?"
This may be too difficult, so try this:

"Ask your pupil a question, such as: "Where do we get water from?" This, we hope, will elicit the reply "A tap" and help you build a word list around "t".

B. Summary of Lesson Model

1. The sentences used for illustration were provided by a 32 year old man who has spent his adult life in a training centre.

a) Sentences from pupil (2/3) 'I saw a diesel shunting.
It was shunting at Shell Mex terminal.
It was taking oil to Shell Mex.'

b) Pupil reads sentences back.
c) Write out two exactly similar copies.
d) Cut one copy into sentence strips.
e) Pupil matches sentence to sentence. Reads.
f) Cut sentence strips into words.
g) Pupil matches words to words — one sentence at a time.
h) Check reading.
j) Pupil learns words randomly in isolation.
  i) with sentence sheet as support.
  ii) without sentence sheet support.
k) Repeat whole programme with a new set of sentences.
l) Begin initial letter phonic work:
  i) ask for words beginning with specific letter sound.
  ii) prepare questions which will elicit words with specific letter sound.
  iii) Stott Touch Cards.

Summary: In following this double lesson plan you will be building your pupil's sight vocabulary, but, from the beginning you will also be giving him the basis of phonic knowledge.

C. Introducing Reading Without Books – Method 2
Making Your Own Materials With Your Pupil

There is some overlap in the method of working outlined in A.1.-12.

1. What is the subject matter going to be? Discuss your pupil's needs and interests, and decide on a topic that could be built up over a period of weeks.
2. Do you need illustrations? Do you need source books?

   Can your pupil help you get these? Can he write away for information with your help? The N.U.T's "Treasure Chest for Teachers" is helpful in supplying addresses, associations etc.
3. Making a start. Here you should follow the procedure outlined in Method 1. A.1. to 12.
4. Can you type the work, and mount illustrations? This will give a much more professional appearance which is of obvious benefit to your pupil.
5. As you build up the material, revise the previous week's work.
6. Don't lose sight of:
   a) the continued importance of your pupil's interest and involvement.
   b) his need to develop as a fluent reader, reading in as natural a manner as possible.
   c) words he has given you that can be used to help his phonic work.
   d) words he has given you that present special difficulties such as awkward and exceptional spelling patterns that simply have to be learned on their own. The classic cases are words like trough, though, through and thorough. Draw your pupil's attention to these and try and get him to use the words in a fresh sentence. Alternatively you could make up sentences demanding their use, and leave a blank where the key word has to be filled in.
7. Extension Possibilities

   What has been suggested so far can be limited by possible lack of depth knowledge. The following suggestions might help take it further.
   a) Relevant passages from books or pamphlets could be read to, or with your pupil, or recorded on tape. (see section F.1.)
   b) The finished materials could become part of a stock of suitable reading for use with other pupils. A pupil "exchange of information" scheme opens up the further possibility of pupils helping each other and working together.

8. Concluding Note

Don't regard this work as all-embracing. Unfortunately adult non-readers (like a number of children) expect to see books around and to be getting started on reading them. They may feel, as children sometimes do, that materials you and they have prepared together are a poor substitute for books, however poorly written or irrelevant to adult interests those books may be.

It is worthwhile bearing in mind that it is often the teacher who gets most upset at seeing adults reading childrens' primers. Remember that some of them come because their children are coming home asking what the words in those books say: and that seems one good reason why they might want to be able to read them as well!

So there is motivation in both angles: making your own materials harnesses your pupil's interests and involves him in communication, giving him a reading book may well give him the feeling he really has begun to read.

D. Writing

1. The importance of good handwriting cannot be overstressed for these reasons:

   a) Practice of letter shapes helps discrimination.

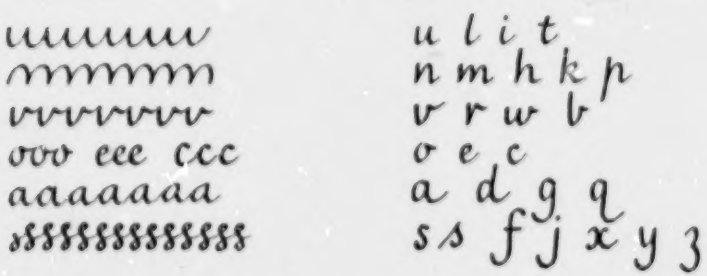
   b) Practice of words helps spelling, and word discrimination.

   The following patterns are based on the Marion Richardson system – for which a set of books can be obtained.

Pattern	Capitals	Small Letters
WWW	A M V W	v w
≡||≡||≡	T F E H L I	l i
ωωω	U G C O Q	u g q o a c t
∩∩∩	P B D R	p b d r n m h e
\\\X///	X Y Z N K	x y z k
∿∿∿	S J	s j f

Writing Patterns

Small Letters



2. These instructions for letter formation and letter patterns are well worth following. They build up correct writing habits and help towards good control of pen or pencil. If your pupil already writes reasonably well you are safe to ignore them, but if not it is strongly recommended that they be followed and practised from the beginning.

   If, on the other hand, your pupil writes but writes very poorly, it may be best to explain to him that he should really start again with an alternative system. In one case, a young adult was given a script pen in order to force him to slow down and adopt a new style.

A B C D E F G
H I J K L M N
O U P Q R S T
V W X Y Z
1234567890
a b c d e f g
h i j k l m n o
p q r s t u v
w x y z

3. When you have finished some of the work on sentences, words, and initial letters, do some writing pattern practice. Start with small letter writing patterns, and go on to common combinations of letters, such as consonant-vowel, and vowel-consonant.

4. Work in the writing of the sentences you have been given as soon as possible. Also, get your pupil to practise his name and address as a top priority.

E. Word Attack Skills

1. What are you actually doing when you read? Do you look at every letter? Do you look at every word? Probably you do neither — your eyes move along the line, and, if the material contains words that are familiar to you, it is unlikely that you are conscious of each separate word.

   Every so often, however, you come across a word you don't know. What do you do then? Do you skip it because you're not very bothered — the passage is making sense anyway? Do you make a guess based on the context? Do you try and hear the word in your mind? And does that help you with the meaning? Or do you reach for a dictionary? Consider these alternatives very carefully: they can tell you a great deal about what we should and should not be doing as reading teachers.

   In his article in "The Reading Curriculum" William Gray lists four main aids to word perception:

2. a) Memory of word form/shape.
   b) Clues from the context.
   c) Analysis of the word.
   d) Use of the dictionary.

   In this section I will only be discussing items (a) and (b).

3. Memory of Word Form / Shape

   These factors may help your pupil to remember what a word looks like.

   a) The general pattern of the word — particularly if the word is a short one.
   b) The length of the word.
   c) The initial letter of the word.
   d) The final letter of the word.
   e) Distinctive letter groups e.g. 'oo' in 'look' or 'ttl' in 'little'.

   From a teaching point of view this is not very helpful as ideas of shape, length, and differences/similarities are not really trainable but build up through the memorisation of previous experience. Written work will be of further help here.

4. Clues from Context

a) Words can have more than one meaning, and you need the context to help find that meaning. Try these: bank, gravity, post, sign.

b) Words follow each other in certain orders in our language and a pattern will tend to suggest that a particular word has a particular purpose in the phrase or sentence. This can account for many so-called "errors" in reading. e.g. They can be a good guess based on context that leads to a synonym being given.

Try these:

The boy . . . the ball. (hit, batted, threw, rolled?)

Where he . . they make diesel engines.

5. Now consider the plight of the beginning reader. He is not familiar with many words, so what happens when he meets a word he does not know:

a) You can tell him.

b) He can make a guess.

c) He can have a go at sounding it out.

(a) implies he is a complete beginner; or that he has failed with (b) and (c) and cannot use or does not have a dictionary.

(b) implies there are some clues he can find based on words he knows in the passage — in other words he is using the context.

(c) implies he has certain phonic skills that enable him to sound and blend the letters. This is dealt with later (Section G.)

6. I now want to discuss E.5 (b) in greater detail.

When you reach words that are unknown to you, you can, depending on the level of the material — combined with your interest in and knowledge of the subject matter, supply a good guess based on context.

Reading experts who are concerned to relate reading teaching to the pupil's knowledge of his spoken language patterns (which we all have instinctively without any formal grammatical training) believe that such guessing is very important and should be encouraged. The American linguist Frank Smith ("Psycholinguistics and Reading") has this to say:

" 'reading carefully' is not efficient reading, and reading without guessing is not reading at all . . . In order to read one must guess, not recklessly, but on an informed basis. Informed guessing means making the best use of non-visual information . . ."

i.e. the knowledge of language patterns and word order which we all have is prompting us as to what to expect next. No one can tell you how to bear this in mind when you are teaching reading: there is no method. It is more a way of looking at reading and taking the view when you are listening to someone read that

a) mistakes often have a logical explanation, and b) of not doing anything which discourages your pupil from making an "informed guess."

7. How can we tie this up with the level your pupil should be reading at? Johnson and Kress in "The Reading Curriculum" give these levels as guides:

a) Independent Reading Level.

Word Recognition: 99% correct.
Comprehension: 90% correct.

This means that a reader at this level usually meets a "problem" word roughly once in every hundred, and can be said to be reading in a relaxed way and understanding the meaning of the passage.

At this level support will not be needed.

b) Instructional Reading Level.

Word Recognition: 95% correct.
Comprehension: 75% correct.

This is very roughly the level a pupil should be at from the point of view of reading matter he is using in the learning situation to improve his reading attainment — approximately one word in twenty will present a problem.
What support can you give your pupil?

i) You can tell him the word.
ii) You could encourage him to attack it from context or phonic clues.
iii) If his reading is sufficiently advanced you could encourage the use of a simple dictionary, but this is unlikely to be helpful at the level which concerns us here.

c) Frustration Level

Word Recognition: 90% or below.
Comprehension: 50% or below.

At this level your pupil would be finding at least one word in ten a problem and it would be argued that the material is too hard for him to be using without very considerable support. Such support could take the following forms:

i) You could read the passage to him, pointing out words you know he has not previously met and discussing them.
ii) You could pre-record the passage on tape or cassette, if one is available. Please see section F.1.

8. To summarise: the interest level of the material could be a crucial factor in modifying the figures set out by Johnson and Kress, as could the use of the various support techniques mentioned. This really improves the case for making your own materials where the interest factor can be much greater, and the context and meaning aspects have come from your pupil.

F. Using Cassette or Tape Recorder

1. These suggestions for the use of tape or cassette can only begin to explore the possibilities of the media.

   a) Record the passage you want your pupil to read using normal speed and intonation. I suggest that with a beginning reader you keep the passage down to two or three sentences in the first instance.

   b) Follow (a) by asking your pupil to listen again whilst you record the passage much more slowly — try to keep your intonation as normal as possible.

   c) Repeat (b) if you feel the repetition may be justified.

   d) Ask your pupil to read the passage with you. This, too, could be repeated if you wished.

   e) Either: i) ask your pupil to switch the tape off and read the passage to himself, or

      ii) ask him to record the passage himself and

   f) go back to the beginning of the tape and check his achievement through.

2. Some of the phonic exercises listed in section G.7 & 8 could be reinforced in this media.

   For example, some pupils confronted with the **sight** of this word list:

   "nut cup house gun but" will not spot that 'house' is the odd word out because it has the letter 'u' within it.

   However, when heard, it is obviously spotted.
   Similarly, initial letter phonic work and aural discrimination can be very greatly developed in this media.
   "bat bag dog big"
   "sit zip sun soon"

G. Phonics

1. The analysis of words takes two basic forms:

   a) Structural: roots, pre-fixes, suffixes.
   e.g. play, plays, player, played, playing, replay, replayed.

   b) Phonetic: sounds of individual letters.
   sounds of letter clusters.

2. In teaching phonics in English the problem one encounters immediately is the fact that a) there are so many 'exceptions', and b) the actual number of rules that could be taught is massive. Most of us never learned these rules in any great number in order to learn to read.

3. If properly presented phonic work can give your pupil the opportunity to generalize about the spelling and sound patterns of our written language. However, there is the danger of over-generalization. Take these words for example:

beat, feat, heat, meat, peat, seat. (O.K. so far!)

dead, head, stead, meadow. (Still O.K.)

lead read. (?)

So not only has the pupil to learn that "ea" can sound like "ee" or "e", but in some words only the context will suggest which it is where words are spelt the same! This obviously limits the phonic generalizations your pupil can make.

Secondly, of course, there is the problem of words which are right outside any pattern, such as the 'ough' words mentioned already in section B.6 (d). You should draw your pupil's attention to these and make it clear that they have to be learned as isolated cases.

4. The teaching of phonics by explicitly stated rules has great dangers. Take, for example a rule one still hears used:

"When two vowels go out for a walk, the first one does the talking."

Now this rule is meant to refer to such words as:
"boat, beat, coat, heat" etc. However, within the very rule itself there is an exception: "does" !

This is not the only reason for avoiding such rules: many of them are so involved with concepts the pupil may not understand that they can cause needless confusion.

Drawing your pupils attention to word lists with common letter, letter cluster, or syllable forms is much to be preferred to the stating of abstract rules.

Finally do remember: phonics are merely an aid to decoding, they never told anyone the **meaning** of a word not previously met. This again reinforces the case for pupil-centred material.

5. The Sequence of Phonic Teaching recommended by J. M. Hughes: "Phonics and the Teaching of Reading".

a) Initial consonant sounds: t b n r m s d c p g

b) Short vowels, initially placed:

i) a e i o u
ii) placed in the middle of a word.
iii) 'y' in baby, and 'y' in fly.

c) Initial consonant sounds: f l y v h j k z w
(Note the absence of 'q' and 'x')

d) Doubled consonants: bb dd ff gg ll nn ss ck

e) Initial consonant diagraphs: ch sh th wh qu

f) Initial consonant blends: st sp sc sk sl sm sn sw br cr dr pr tr gr bl pl cl fl gl.

g) Vowel digraphs and diphthongs:

ai ay (plain; day)	oi oy (boil; boy)
oo (food; wood)	oa ow (cow; snow)
ou (about; route)	au aw all ee ea (bean; head)
ew ue ei ie (died; piece)	

h) Soft 'c' (centre); 'g' (gentlemen); 's' (has).

j) Final and silent 'e':
useless; kettle; horse.
modifier; cake, bite, bone, tube.

k) Modifying 'r' : car, for, firl, burn, fern.
warm, worm (note effect of 'w')

l) Silent letters: b g m gh k l p t w

m) Prefixes: ad ab be com de dis en ex pro re sub

n) Syllables: ing ed er ly es tion

p) Suffixes: ion tion :tion er y al ent ful ity ly ure ous

6. "Sound Sense" Books 1-8, Tansley, E. J. Arnold.
These are books of useful exercises for phonic work.
The Teacher's Book contains a useful set of 110 graded spelling assignments.

"Sounds and Words" Books 1-6, Southgate and Havenhand, Univ. of London Press. This series contains lists of words for use in teaching various phonic rules.

"Spelling" Books 0-5, John Smith, Cassell.

7. In the early stages of phonic work the teaching of initial consonant sounds is the most useful activity you can undertake. This has already been implied in section A.12. This view is that of Donald Moyle: "The Teaching of Reading" p. 164 f, in which the author gives a useful sequence of phonic work related to reading age levels.

A good way of teaching initial letter sounds is to be found in the Stott Programmed Reading Kit's Touch Cards. These cards consist of a picture on one side, with the initial letter sound printed below. On the reverse there is the initial letter sound only.

a) The pupil is shown two cards with shall we say, pictures of a gun and a table. You check that the pupil can name the picture — not the formality you might think! (Gun might well be rifle, for example!) Then go over the words emphasizing the initial letter sounds, and establishing the 't' below table, and 'g' below gun.

b) Withdraw the cards, shuffle them out of sight, and show them to your pupil again with **only the letter side showing.** You now say to your pupil: "Where is the gun"? All being well, he will choose the card with the 'g' showing.

c) If he progresses well you should run through the initial letter sounds quite easily. If you cannot persuade your organizer to buy **at least** the Touch Cards, First Letter Cards, and Dozens from the Stott Kit, then Thomas Hope Ltd. publish a pack of 216 coloured pictures from which you can make similar aparatus yourself.

d) If on the other hand you have problems with this work, and you have reason to think that your pupil is not managing to distinguish certain letter sounds (e.g.: b - p - d; s - z; m - n etc.) then try the test ideas outlined in section K.3. (b).

Don't rush into testing - the problem could be the newness of the work and the concept of isolated letter sounds.

8. Having established a knowledge of initial letter sound I would recommend a start on Sound Sense Book 1. Your only problem here is that you may need to help your pupil disentangle the material he is working on from the instructional material. If necessary write it out on separate paper - and don't forget the cassette if you can use one. (section F.2.)

The following list of activities is taken from some of those recommended by Tansley in his "Reading and Remedial Reading" Chapter Six.

a) Sound Families.

i) Rhyming words: hat cat bat
bread head dead etc.

ii) Find the odd one out:
bell shell gun well -
table fox fire fight

iii) Find the words in the (specific) sound family:
has hat hug bat
tip tap man ten

You will notice that the criterion as to what the family is can, and should, be changing. It can be the middle vowel, the initial consonant, a common digraph, the final letter, diphthongs, blends, syllables, etc.)

b) Match the correct sound.

i) initial letters: .... ird
.... ent t b

ii) final letter: boa ....
he ..... n t

iii) vowel: l .....g
s .....n u e

c) Unjumble:

i) the word: abot - boat
shif - fish

ii) the sentence:

lamb Mary little a had	Mary had a little lamb

iii) the story:

I went to work.	I got out of bed
I shaved.	I shaved
I got out of bed.	I got dressed.
I ate my breakfast.	I ate my breakfast.
I got dressed.	I went to work.

d) Making words:

i) How many words can you make with letters from: 'electricity'

ii) words within words: carpet – car, pet.

iii) compound words: shop (add) keeper – shopkeeper.

e) Comprehension:

i) Find the right word: The (bag, bad) was full of sweets.

ii) Right or wrong "We eat on the roof"

iii) Match questions and answers from two jumbled sets of both:

What is the first month of the year? Answer: London.
What is the biggest city in England? Answer: January.

iv) Read a story and answer questions about it.

v) Read the answer to a question and make up the question; We get wool from sheep. What question has been asked?

vi) Finish a story.

vii) Find the word:
I have four legs, you sit on me, (etc.), What am I?

f) Dictionary work:

i) What does . . . . . mean?

ii) Can you find a word beginning with (initial letter, or first two/three) which means . . . . . ?

H. Spelling

"He mispells words for the same reason that he refuses to be a thief. That is, he must endeavour to behave in a manner consistent with his conception of himself."

Prescott Leeky, quoted by M. L. Peters in "Spelling – Caught or Taught?"

1. This section leans exclusively on the two excellent books by M. L. Peters: "Spelling – Caught or Taught?" and "Success in Spelling".

   It is a fact that many adults who come to "reading" classes can read reasonably well but feel themselves to be seriously handicapped by spelling problems.

   Teachers in the field realize, of course, that the problem is not always as simple as this.

2. In "Success in Spelling", Peters lists seven factors essential for spelling attainments:

   a) Practice in writing.
   b) Certainty of letter formation.
   c) Speed of handwriting.
   d) Attention to word form.
   e) Awareness of common letter sequences and probabilities of these occuring.
   f) Span of apprehension of letter sequences; i.e. length.
   g) Visual imagery – the mind's eye.

3. Peter's has this to say about items (a) (b) and (c):

   " . . . casual and slow handwriting . . . (implies) . . . an uncertainty about letter formation and a time consuming uncertainty about letter sequence as well as letter formation."

   The teaching implications here are to re-emphasize the importance of good free-flowing handwriting combined with certain knowledge of letter formation. Please re-read section D in this context.

   You may need to begin by making your pupil actually trace over what you have written if his handwriting and letter formation is very uncertain.

   Speed is a matter of practice and should not really be pushed in the beginning stages. Emphasis should be placed on daily practice.

4. Concerning items 2(d) and (e) there is a strong link here with the phonic work outlined in section G, in particular G.6 and G.8.

   You will need to draw your pupils attention explicitly to the similarities of word lists in the books mentioned in section G.6. and thus help him build up a knowledge of such patterns. Remember most of us acquired these patterns quite unconsciously and incidentally and thus often forget that poorer readers and spellers do not have them available, and almost certainly will not learn them incidentally.

Try yourself on these nonsense words, for example:

pca
soy
tmsi
eaber
dgsumz
crectous
aksgmwyo
helemphony

It is immediately obvious that you would be able to spell some of the "words" on this list without further learning because you recognize them as conforming to English spelling patterns.

However, there are others which might take some time to learn. Isn't that just the situation your pupil is in?

5. Items 2 (f) and (g) are more controversial and imply specific training. Item (f) is suggesting that the actual length of the word is a problem, and that your pupil will need to move gradually from very small words to larger ones; whilst item (g) is suggesting that your pupil's ability to "see" words in his "mind's eye" can be trained.

   a) You will need at least two sets of "flash" cards starting with two letter words and building up to words of nine or ten letters. How many you will need at each stage will obviously depend on your pupil, but it is more than likely that as length increases so more practice at each stage will be required. It is suggested that **each set** has at least six words prepared at each letter number level, which means twelve in all.

   b) Use for item 2 (f) as follows:

      i) Show your pupil each card for, say, about ten seconds; withdraw it and ask him to write the word.

      ii) Find out where his optimum level of attainment is.

      iii) Below that level practise gradually cutting down the exposure time to two or three seconds.

      iv) Above that level you may have to increase the exposure time to get accuracy, and then cut it down.

      v) Now repeat the process with the second set of cards.

   c) Use for item 2 (g) as follows:

      i) Show your pupil each card for, say, about ten seconds.

      ii) Withdraw the card and ask him to try and "see" the word in his mind. Labour this point heavily: ask him if he can see each letter in sequence, ask him to call them out to you.

      iii) Repeat (ii) but get pupil to say the word very slowly and ask him to "see" the letters as he hears the sounds.

      iv) Ask him to write the word down.

v) Try the second set for shorter exposure times, but remember this is not the first object of this exercise.

6. Tansley, in "Reading and Remedial Reading" recommends a self-teaching exercise with his spelling assignments which would reinforce sections 5 (b) and (c) above. The pupil checks with you that he can read the words on the assignment, and he then practises looking at each word, turning the card over, and trying to spell it from memory.

J. Social Sight Vocabulary

1. Remedial reading teachers often talk about a "social sight vocabulary" in the context of children whom teachers feel are perhaps making no useful progress at even the beginnings of reading but still need to be saved from possible arrest if they stray into the wrong public toilet. (Though, with the advent of pictorial symbols, this argument no longer holds the validity it once did!)

ADDRESS GENTLEMEN OPEN AGE GENTS PAY HERE AVENUE (av.) HALT PLEASE BANK HOSPITAL POISON BUS STOP HOT POLICE BY REQUEST ICE CREAM POST OFFICE CAFE KEEP LEFT PRESS CHOCOLATE KEEP OUT PRIVATE CLOSED KEEP OFF PROHIBITED COLD LADIES PULL CROSS NOW LAVATORY PUSH DANGER MEN PUBLIC CONVENIENCE DATE MILK RING DOCTOR (DR.) Mr. ROAD (RD.) DOWN Mrs. SHUT ENGAGED NO SIGNATURE ENQUIRIES NO ENTRY SILENCE ENTRANCE NO SMOKING STAMP EXIT NOTICE STOP FIRE ALARM ON STREET (ST.) FIRE ESCAPE OFFICE SURNAME FISH & CHIPS OFF TEA THANK YOU TOILET UP VACANT WAY IN WAY OUT WET PAINT WOMEN YES.

Words such as these should be printed, in capitals, or small letters, according to recognized public usage. This list is taken from Peter Bell, "Basic Teaching for Slow Learners."

2. The danger of such a list is that it can be misused because of a simple oversight: the basic question is not "What do I think this pupil needs to be taught?" but "How can I relate what I think this pupil needs to be taught with his problems and what he feels his needs to learn?" In the latter case learning becomes a partnership – a factor which we often forget in practice.

In this case you might like to consider the possibility of harnessing the "social sight vocabulary" principle to a real life need such as form filling. When your pupil needs help of this kind I would suggest two lines of approach:

i) Helping Your Pupil Fill In a Form

It is more than likely that there will be too much reading material for your pupil to learn to read a form in time to fill it in. Therefore, read it through with him, explaining the parts as you go along. Then go through each section again and write down the necessary replies and answers on a spare piece of paper for him to copy onto the form. This may need to be done one step at a time so as to avoid overloading your pupil with information with its consequent possible confusion.

ii) Helping Your Pupil learn to Read a Form He Will Use Again.

Read the form carefully yourself and decide what is essential and what is irrelevant IN TERMS OF THE SITUATION OF YOUR PUPIL. Headings, key words, and other difficult words could be prepared in a sight vocabulary manner and taught as such: show him the word, tell him the word, ask him to find it on the form – giving reasonable clues as to its whereabouts, and get him to write it down.

Detailed sections could be taken as a piece, read to and discussed with your pupil and again, words outside his reading vocabulary could be treated in the "sight" manner outlined above. To this should be added only such phonic information as is on a par with his progress in phonic work – ie. don't expect him to know complex phonics like the "tion" in "application" if in normal phonic work you are still building up his knowledge of initial letter sounds and short vowel sounds!

3. Specimen work: "Application to Re-license a Motor Vehicle".

These notes cover the top section of the form, and items 1 to 8, purely as a **suggested** approach to this form.

Possible "Sight" Words:

Application	Re-license	Motor	Vehicle
(applied)	License		
FOUR	Licensing		
necessary	TWELVE	months	delete
insurance	Registration	valid	certificate
expiry	Effective	Test	(Certificate)
(expiry)	duty	payable	Particulars
Taxation	possession	BLOCK	CAPITALS
Council	Authority	County	Borough

Much of the material in the Notes on the reverse of the form will not be relevant, but some of it will. Choose a relevant section, such as item 1, sub-heading "APPLICATION TO POST OFFICE" and begin with a normal read-through and discussion of the section. For actual reading work combine a "sight" word with words your pupil already knows. In this latter connection it is worthwhile remembering that a dozen or so words are continually in use whatever the reading matter (a, the, is and, etc.) and if your pupil is building this basic vocabulary from his normal reading he may well be able to read rather more of the material than the forbidding size of print and complexity of layout might lead him to believe. Obviously if you succeed with this work, in even very small sections, the boost to your pupil's confidence will be considerable.

K. Diagnosis

1. Ruth Strang writes:

"As the teacher collects information about the student, he interprets, synthesizes, and uses it to help him improve his reading. Recognizing the individual's present powers, he tries to adjust the curriculum and his teaching procedures to the child's competencies, needs, and interests at the moment."

(The Reading Curriculum)

Diagnosis does not imply formal testing — that is something you should discuss with your organizer. What it implies is a continual assessment of what your pupil is doing and where his weaknesses need strengthening. In other words, it is pupil-centred teaching.

Going beyond the skills of reading what you are trying to teach there are other factors in learning which you will need to be aware of. Learning is never a smooth upward progression even when problems are absent. Everyone to a greater or lesser degree learns in a series of "spurts" and "plateaux". During the latter very little seems to be happening and you may start to get despondent. Don't — plateaux phases are usually preparatory to another spurt. Secondly, you need to be sensitive to your pupils moods and feelings — when he needs an extra push, and when he has had enough and you need to switch to some other skill or close a lesson down early. Remember, he may have just finished work, or be on shift work. For this reason your learning periods should be flexible.

2. Specific problems.

a) Visual

If, over a period of months, your pupil is reversing letters, such as 'b' and 'd'; and words such as 'was' and 'saw' you may feel the need to look into the reasons for this. I stress the words "several months" because such failings can be quite common in initial stages and may right themselves with practice and experience.

However, if they do not you can make up a simple test along these lines:

Letters: b h d p b
c o c e u

Here the pupil is simply asked to circle the letter that is the same as the one on the extreme left.

Words: bat hat pat bat
hull bull hull pull

Here the pupil circles the word that is the same as that on the extreme left.

If your pupil is having a balanced programme of the activities suggested in this booklet and you get trouble on these tests over the long periods of time suggested, then see your organizer about a visual perception programme. (I assume, of course, that the pupil's eyesight HAS been checked!)

3. b) Auditory

Here you need a set of pictures of simple objects whose initial letter sounds are all different. (Avoid sounds like "ch", "sh", etc., at this stage, and stick to single consonants).

Set them out in front of your pupil and:

i) ask him to name them.

ii) ask him which picture's name begins with the sound . . . (and make the actual letter sound).

This test could be helpful if your pupil is having trouble with the initial letter phonic work mentioned in section G. 7. Again, as with the visual side, give it plenty of time. If there is a problem, get in touch with your organizer. Your pupil might benefit from specific auditory discrimination training (Again, I assume hearing HAS been checked!)

4. Concluding note.

Reading involves the senses of sight, sound and movement, and in teaching reading and writing you are involving all three. If one sense is poor it can be compensated by the others.

L. Conclusions

1. Teaching someone to read is a long slow process. What your pupil will need above all else is confidence in you, combined with steady practice and familiarity with reading. He will need a balanced programme of reading, writing, spelling and phonic work based as far as possible on his needs and interests. Remember that his problem is not simply that of learning a new skill. He is unfortunate enough to have twin handicaps standing in his way: he has what we might call the "rubble" of his previous learning — half remembered bits of knowledge from a probably unhappy schooling; and interwoven with this are all the social-emotional defence mechanisms that he has developed over the years in order to live with his problems.

   He probably has put such mental effort into compensating for his disadvantages, and you may also become aware of the fact that those around him have developed unhelpful reactions. He may have experienced rejection on the one hand, and/or possession and dependency of a most unwholesome kind. You will have to weigh-up the situation on its merits and realise that you are NOT a social worker. However, you are much more than just a reading teacher; you may become a confidant for your pupil and thus be placed in a position of delicate responsibility. Also, and this is a problem, relatives may unburden THEIR troubles on you. Seek advice from your organizer who may well feel like getting in touch with the social services if there are severe problems, but at the same time remember the old and very true motto "Hurry slowly."

Using Your Organizer

Remember that your organizer is there to help you. He or she may have a large number of tutors working in your scheme, not to mention other duties. Don't wait to be contacted: if you need help, get in touch. In doing so you are not merely helping yourself and your pupil, you are helping your organizer keep in touch. And with the best will in the world, that is not always easy to do!

References

The Reading Curriculum ed.	Melnick & Merritt	U.L.P.
Psycholinguistics and Reading	Frank Smith	Holt Rinehart & Winston
Phonics and the Teaching of Reading	John Hughes	Evans
The Teaching of Reading	Donald Moyle	Ward Lock Educ.
Spelling – Caught or Taught?	Margaret Peters	Routledge
Success in Spelling	Margaret Peters	Camb.Inst.of Ed.
Basic Teaching for Slow Learners	Peter Bell	Muller

Recommended Books for Teachers and Pupils

i) **Teachers Books**

The Teaching of Reading	Donald Moyle	Ward Lock Educ.
The Disadvantaged Adult	Peter Clyne	Longmans

ii) **Pupils Books**

Key Words Easy Readers.	Books 1-6	Ladybird
The Manxman	Cliff Edwards	Dent
The Raft on the River	Cliff Edwards	Dent
Trend Books		Ginn
Tempo Books		Longmans
Sound Sense	Tansley	E.J. Arnold
Spelling 0-5	John Smith	Cassell
Stott Programmed Reading Kit		Holmes McDougall
Look and Learn Picture Sheets		Thos. Hope.

(For making your own picture-word-letter apparatus outlined in Section G.7).

iii) **Bibliographies**

A Bibliography of Sources for Reading Teachers, T. MacFarlane and D. Lambley, obtainable from: United Kingdom Reading Association, 63 Laurel Grove, Sunderland. Price 15p.

An A-Z List of Reading and Subject Books, E. J. Atkinson and C. W. Gains, Price 50p. from: National Association for Remedial Education, 9 Cranleigh Rise, Eaton, Norwich, NOR 54D

These two bibliographies should provide much of the information you are likely to require, or they will provide pointers to further sources of information.

Feedback

As Bob Kedney said in his preface, we need your comments and criticisms. Future editions (if any!) may be of much greater value if you, the tutors, tell us what you think should be included, extended, made more clear, and so on. Therefore, **please** let us have your ideas.

Do please put either your name and address, or your name and your organization's address.

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1. Have you found this booklet of general practical help?

   Yes. No.

2. Which sections would you like to see extended?

3. Which sections would you like to see clarified? In what way?

4. Which sections have you found unhelpful, and why?

5. Would you like to see sections added on factors in reading which have not been covered?

6. Have you any other comments, suggestions, criticisms?

7. a) Experience in teaching adults to read:

   None; 1 yr; 2 yrs; 2 yrs. plus.

   b) Experience in teaching school children to read.